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THE GOVERNMENT AND THE NEWSPAPER PRESS IN ENGLAND.

THE purpose of this article is to trace the change which, during the last century, has come over the connection of the government with the newspaper press, so far as concerns the use of the press by the government and the attitude of the government towards newspapers, newspaper proprietors and journalists. For this purpose the beginning of George III's reign may be taken as a starting point; for from the first and second decades of that reign may be dated the beginnings of the modern daily press in England. Between 1760 and 1780 there came into existence in London numerous daily journals, of which several survived until the middle years of this century, and one, the *Morning Post*, still survives and flourishes.

During that period the daily journals began really to be newspapers. In the second decade of George III's reign they were reporting the debates in the House of Commons and the House of Lords under the same constitutional conditions as at the present time; and that these Parliamentary reports were full, fair and adequate is shown by the frequent references to them as such in Walpole's letters to Mann, and in other letters and diaries covering the first half of the Georgian era. The law courts were being reported, as were the quotations on the stock exchange and in the produce markets. News from the provinces was being collected and published with more or less system, and some attention was being given to foreign affairs. In short, by about 1770 the news letters were at an end and the era of the modern daily press had begun. Newspapers were commercial enterprises, conducted by responsible business men on commercial principles, and drawing their revenues from sales and advertising patronage; and there was no place left for the ephemeral journals like the scores which had come and gone between the Commonwealth and the American Revolu-

tion—the one-man journals which had been so largely made use of by the government during the reigns of Queen Anne and the first two Georges.

Soon after printing was introduced into England the government turned the new art to their account; and certainly from the time of the Commonwealth to the eve of the Reform Act of 1832 the government usually had in their service some official whose work it was to superintend the press and through it to influence public opinion. Milton and Needham acted in this capacity during the Commonwealth. Sir Joseph Williamson was partly in charge of the press during the Restoration. Defoe took up the work after the Revolution. Swift followed Defoe, and in his turn was followed for a while by Paxton, who also did much borough-mongering for Walpole. Mallett and Roberts, among others, were engaged in writing for the treasury when Newcastle was supreme; while during the long reign of George III there was a succession of managers or supervisors of the press in behalf of the government. The list includes Weston, who discharged some of the duties in the early years of the reign; James Macpherson, of *Ossian* notoriety, who took up the work when Lord North was in power; Rose, who was doing some of it in Pitt's time; and Croker, who began it in the second decade of the nineteenth century and continued it long after George III was dead—in fact, until the end of the last Tory administration which preceded the Reform Act.¹ Weston was under-secretary for foreign affairs, when, in 1763, he seems to have been acting as an intermediary between the government and the press. Macpherson, on the other hand, was, about 1767, specially engaged to act as the treasury editor. He had been in the Western provinces and the West Indies from 1764 to 1766, as surveyor-general of the Western provinces, at a salary of £200 a year; and when he got back to London this salary was con-

¹ From the colony of Maryland at the Revolution of 1776, Chalmers, the Tory, went as a writer to the aid of George III, and he wrote in behalf of the government until the time of the French Revolution. But Chalmers's work went chiefly into pamphlets and books published in the interest of the government: he seems to have had no close connection with the newspaper press.

tinued on the understanding that he should become a political writer in the interest of the government. Rose, who among his other services established the *Sun* in 1793 in the interest of Pitt, was secretary to the treasury. His partner in the newspaper enterprise was Francis Freeling, secretary of the post-office, then a department which could do much to help a government paper or to put obstacles in the way of opposition or independent journals. Croker was secretary of the admiralty during the years he was busied with the press, and he is nearly the last of the long line of press managers in the interest of the government reaching back to Milton and Needham. According to Greville, work similar to that of Croker was done for the Whigs, when they came into power in 1831 and for a few years after the Reform Act, by Le Marchant. His principal activity was in connection with the *Morning Chronicle*; but the conditions with regard to the press were changing again when the Whigs were in power, and Le Marchant can hardly have had the same opportunities that Croker enjoyed for carrying out this work.¹

The new era in English journalism had not quite begun when George III came to the throne. One-man journals of the old school were still in existence. Smollett in 1762 was conducting *The Briton*; while Dr. Francis, the father of Sir Philip Francis, and Arthur Murphy were of the group of treasury writers carried over from the previous reign. It is remarkable how many of these government writers came from Scotland and Ireland and how many of them were of the church. Francis was of the church, and he received as part payment for his services the appointment as chaplain to Chelsea Hospital. Murphy took his pay in various ways. On one occasion he was given an ensigncy in a regiment by Lord Holland in return for his journalistic services. He sold it, and, some scandal arising out of the sale, the transaction led to the

¹ From Croker's own papers, from Scott's *Life and Diary*, from Lockhart's *Life*, from Coleridge's *Letters* and from Daniel Stuart's *Reminiscences*, it is almost as easy to realize Croker's work in connection with the newspapers as it is to trace that of Milton or Swift in managing in behalf of their governments the journals of their day.

establishment of the rule of advertising army appointments and promotions in the *London Gazette*—a rule which is in force to-day as regards all appointments in the army and the navy and to the civil service.

While the old form of journalism lasted it was an expensive one for the government, for the one-man journals made no pretense of paying their way. From 1731 to 1742 over £50,000 were paid out by the Walpole government to authors and printers of *Free Britons*, *Daily Courants*, *Gazetteers* and such journals; and in the *Anecdotes of Chatham* there is a statement that during the first three years of the reign of George III £30,000 were expended on the writing and printing of similar publications. By 1763 the daily papers of the new type—newspapers, as distinct from papers printed solely to serve the purpose of the government—were being used by the government. Among the Dartmouth Manuscripts there is a letter from Lord Halifax, written in July, 1763, to Edward Weston, who was then under-secretary for foreign affairs, asking him to contradict a story which had appeared in the *North Briton* concerning a pension charged on the Irish establishment. With the contradiction there was also a letter, which Halifax desired should be printed in the *Whitehall Gazette* and the *St. James's Gazette*, and also in the *Public Advertiser* and the *Daily Gazetteer*, which were then morning newspapers. That the statesmen of this period were quick to note the change which was coming over the press and the extended usefulness of newspapers is shown by a letter in the Townsend Manuscripts, written by Charles Townsend to the Duke of Newcastle. It is dated April 30, 1764, and suggests that

to gain upon the minds of the people, a daily paper upon the plan of one of the present prints should be set up and circulated diligently, but quietly; and two good pens should be employed to write from material suggested by men of knowledge, and subject to their inspection.

The change from the old to the new system was complete when Macpherson, after his return from the West Indies,

settled down to the work of a treasury editor. The development of newspapers, according to Mr. Lecky, had then put an end to or absorbed the literature of detached periodical essays, which during the three preceding reigns had been so considerable, and the best periodical writing was now finding its way into the newspapers. But another quarter of a century was to elapse before the editorial article was to become a feature of the daily press : until then political opinions were expressed in the news which the editors chose to publish, and especially in the "Letters to the Editor" which were admitted to the columns of the papers.

It was therefore for many years the work of the treasury editors to watch this correspondence, to write letters in reply, and to secure their insertion in the daily press. Macpherson was engaged in this work, and over such signatures as "Musæus" and "Scævola" he wrote in reply to "Junius." He also exercised a general supervision over the newspapers. His duty was to prevent attacks upon the government, as well as to write regularly in their defense. The pay for this work in Macpherson's case was comparatively good, as before he had been long engaged in it his salary was increased from £200 to £600 a year. By 1770 the treasury had organized a systematic supervision of the press ; for at the trial of Almon, of the *Political Register*, in that year, it was revealed that there were then two "messengers of the press" employed by the government on salary to purchase the newspapers and to note their contents. If Daniel Stuart's *Reminiscences* are to be relied upon, this systematic oversight of the press was continued as late as the time when Coleridge was writing for the press.¹

The new style of journalism necessarily involved more adroit

¹ Stuart was owner of the *Morning Post* and the (evening) *Courier*. He states that once, on information obtained from Coleridge, he wrote for the *Courier* a paragraph regarding the conduct of the Duke of York. Early copies of the *Courier* were at this time sent to the government offices; and before the rest of the edition could be printed on the hand presses of that period, messengers appeared at the newspaper office with the demand that the entire edition should be cancelled.

management and more watching than the old. A writer like Smollett — to go back no further than George III's reign for an example — was not likely to write anything which would involve the canceling of an entire edition of his journal; and when Swift was in charge of the press he had the government printers and writers so closely under his eye that nothing could slip into print contrary to his instructions.

From the American Revolution to the French Revolution the use of the press can be traced in the *Letters of King George to North*, in Walpole's *Letters*, and in the Miles *Correspondence*. The *Letters to North* afford some glimpses of the connection which then existed between the treasury and the newspaper editors who were in its pay. Bates was the most notorious of these. According to the Walpole *Letters*, Bates's allowance was £400 a year. Whatever it was, it was grudgingly paid by George III. The king, who was in these matters exceedingly business-like, had a poor idea of the value of Bates's work and of Bates himself; and, having at this time so many other uses for the money at his disposal for electioneering, for managing the House of Commons and for influencing public opinion, he paid with but ill-grace the allowance with which Bates was rewarded.

The Miles *Correspondence*, which covers the period of the French Revolution, shows that, as in Macpherson's time, the treasury-paid editors were expected to keep out objectionable articles, as well as to uphold and defend the government, and that there was a close connection between the editors and the treasury. If the newspaper editors were in doubt as to the insertion of a letter from a correspondent, the communication was carried to the treasury and was passed upon by the official who was superintending the press. In this way the government saved itself from criticism and oftentimes from exposure; and was also enabled to approach and endeavor to win over to its side writers who were new in the field. From the Miles *Correspondence*, it is evident that when Rose was at the treasury the newspapers were closely watched. Efforts were made to ascertain the writers of the letters addressed to the

editors which were published anonymously, and when these efforts were successful, as in the Miles case, they were followed by overtures to accept service under the government.

Towards the close of the century there is ample evidence that the government was making use of the provincial press. Many of the English provincial cities then had their local weekly newspapers; and, as the municipal records and local histories of these old places show, the old corporations and municipal cliques had lost no time in getting the newspapers on their side. This usually meant the side of the local vested interests, and also the side of the government — the side which was opposed to all reform. Only slowly and with much caution had the provincial newspapers concerned themselves with national politics. As late as 1745 an editor of a York paper was punished by the House of Commons for printing a news paragraph narrating its proceedings; and as late as 1761 a general election passed with only the slightest allusion in the Liverpool journals, although Liverpool, with its large freeman electorate, was a centre of much political activity. As early as 1733 candidates for Parliament had used the provincial newspapers for publishing their addresses to the freeholders and to the electors in the cities and boroughs. But until towards the end of the eighteenth century the conductors of the provincial newspapers, who as a rule were master printers, were usually content to let national politics alone.

It is more than probable that when, about the time of the French Revolution, the local newspapers began to take more general notice of current politics, they did so at the instance of the treasury. When they went into politics it was invariably in the interest of the Pitt government. The reason for this is explained by a passage in the life of Edward Baines. Baines took over the *Leeds Mercury* in 1800. When he got possession he found that for some years previously it had been the usage at the *Mercury* office to receive marked copies of newspapers from London. These were sent out regularly by the treasury, and the newspapers thus forwarded to the country editors were London papers under the

control of the government. Unfortunately for the students of English politics between the French Revolution and the Reform Act, and of the history of English journalism, Baines left no record of the London newspapers which were thus being sent to the country editors when he began his eminently useful and distinguished career. Nor does his biographer indicate how long the practice had been in vogue. It may be taken for granted, however, that the *Sun*, which had been set up by Rose and Freeling in 1793, was one of the papers sent out; and that, while it lasted, Gifford's *Anti-Jacobin and Weekly Examiner* was also one of the number.

The *Anti-Jacobin* was only a short-lived publication. It lasted from November, 1797, to July, 1798, and in all thirty-six numbers were published. But from the point of view of the government it was a veritable editors' hand-sheet. Its features, to quote the prospectus, were

an abstract of the important events of the week both at home and abroad; such reflections as may arise out of them; [and, most important of all] a contradiction and confutation of the falsehoods and misrepresentations concerning these events, their causes and their consequences, which may be found in the papers devoted to the cause of sedition and irreligion, to the pay or principles of France.

The *Anti-Jacobin* was further to appeal to all

who think that the press has been long enough employed principally as an engine of destruction and who wish to see the experiment fairly tried, whether that engine by which many of the states which surround us have been overthrown and others shaken to their foundations, may not be turned into an instrument of defense for the one remaining country which has establishments to protect and a government with the spirit and the power and the wisdom to protect them.

William Gifford,¹ afterwards editor of the *Quarterly Review*

¹ There were two Giffords at this period. Both were associated with publications to which the name "Anti-Jacobin" was given. Both were in the service of the government, and both of them were adequately rewarded for their literary work. John Gifford, of the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, which followed the *Anti-Jacobin* of 1797-98, was made a London stipendiary magistrate for his services to the government.

and associate of Croker, edited the *Anti-Jacobin and Weekly Examiner*; and in this enterprise, in behalf of the Pitt government, he had associated with him the cleverest and most numerous staff ever got together for a newspaper of this kind. Much of the editorial work was done on Sunday; for the *Anti-Jacobin* was published in London on Monday, and in the coaching days it would reach the country editors in time for the issues of their journals, which went to press at the end of the week. For the country journals in the interest of the government there could hardly have been better political matter than that contained in the *Anti-Jacobin*; and, according to Baines's biographer, the country editors depended entirely for their political news on the newspapers which were forwarded to them by the treasury.

In setting up this scheme for using the country press the government relied to some extent on the Church of England clergy. The clergy went into the propaganda as part of the counter movement against Parliamentary reform, and in after years some of them used their zealous efforts in connection with the country press at this period as the basis for claims upon the government for promotion in the church. The editors were rewarded by the gift of postmasterships, by offices in the inland revenue department and by official advertising. Gifford was the most prominent government newspaper writer of this period, and was well rewarded for his services. Journalists were usually paid through pensions and offices. Gifford had no pension, but he held sinecures which were equivalent to a pension. At one time he held three of these: he was comptroller of the lottery office, with a salary of £600 a year; paymaster of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners, with £300 a year; and clerk of the estreats in the court of exchequer, at £200 a year. He was one of the best-paid government journalists of the Georgian era; and in his turn he is credited with having rendered the government literary services second only to those of Burke.

In the two decades which followed the French Revolution no department of the newspaper press was ignored by the

treasury. The French immigrants in London had established *Le Courier de Londres*. This paper was in the service of the government, and was for some time nominally edited by Heron, the author of a history of Scotland, who owed his appointment to one of the under-secretaries of state. The mission of this journal, when Heron was connected with it, was to revile Bonaparte and his government. John Peltier, known in English judicial records as the editor of *L'Ambigu*, a political pamphlet of periodical publication, was also in the pay of the government as a journalist. Peltier's connection with the treasury began in the nineties, and was continued to as late as 1815. In that year he drew nearly £800 for his services. As long as England was at war with France there was work for Peltier. Even before the French Revolution the English treasury had in its pay writers for the French newspapers. Among the *Abergavenny Papers* there is a letter written in July, 1779, to Jenkinson, who was then at the treasury, which warrants the suspicion that the *Cologne Gazette* was a journal which might be used in the interest of England.

For the London newspapers which were willing to place their columns at the service of the government there were other advantages besides treasury allowances to their editors and appointments in the civil service. They received the government advertising, for which the rates were always high and the payment certain, and through the government offices they were furnished with intelligence that added largely to their value as newspapers. Some persons might regard them with disfavor or suspicion on account of their known or suspected connection with the government and their subserviency to it; but the people bought the newspapers, nevertheless, for the news which they contained. The *Courier*, during the time it was owned by Daniel Stuart, was known to be a government paper; but it was none the less a prosperous newspaper, and it received many advantages from its connection with the treasury. Occasionally, as Stuart's *Reminiscences* show, the *Courier* received important items of political news even in advance of the *London*

Gazette, though the latter had been, since the Restoration, the official journal of the government.¹

In addition, moreover, to the direct advantages which accrued to the owners and editors of a journal in the service of the government, there were indirect advantages of great value at a time when the circulation of newspapers was small, when competition was keen, and when the cost of collecting news was high. The nature of these advantages is well indicated by incidents in the history of the *Times*. The *Times* has always been an independent newspaper. In the closing years of the last century and in the early years of this it was impossible for the government to get the *Times* to act as its subservient organ. Accordingly, when, during the war of 1805, the couriers of the *Times* with war news and foreign newspapers arrived at Gravesend, they were stopped by the government officers there and the intelligence they were bringing was held back, solely in the interest of rival daily journals in the service of the government. This was directly charged by the *Times* in 1810.

Further light on the general subject is to be derived from the Croker *Papers*, from which it appears that the proprietor of the *Times*, in 1815, asked as a favor that the French smugglers who were conveying newspapers for him from France should be unmolested by the guard-ships at the ports. An equivalent was offered. This was not, however, the use of the *Times* columns for matter in the interest of the government, but a loan to the government of the smuggled newspapers, after they had served their purposes in Printing House Square; for in those days the *Times* courier services were so well organized that its couriers frequently outdistanced by two or three days the couriers in the service of the government.

Obstacles in the way of legitimate journalistic enterprise, such as those of which the *Times* complained, were often the lot of the opposition and independent newspapers; and these obstacles were deliberately placed in their way as punishments

¹ Until a few years ago there was connected with the *London Gazette* a well-paid editorship, practically a sinecure, which was usually given to a journalist who had rendered conspicuous service to the political party in power when the editorship happened to fall vacant.

for their opposition or independence, and as a means of giving undue advantage to those competitors who were willing to sell themselves to the government. The government journalists had still another advantage. The stringent and far-reaching libel laws of those days had no terrors for the editors who were in constant and sympathetic association with the treasury officials. The government journals often ran near the danger line; but for their doings the treasury solicitors' department had a blind eye. On the other hand, it was only necessary for a government journal to call public attention to a risky paragraph which had appeared in an opposition or an independent journal to put the editor and the printer in the dock at the Old Bailey, and there to array against him all the strength of the law department of the crown. This was the fate of Perry, of the *Morning Chronicle*, in 1810, when he was indicted for a paragraph which he had printed, setting forth the good that might be expected from a change in the government which was then thought to be pending. Perry publicly attributed the prosecution entirely to a rival morning newspaper in the pay of the government, which had laid stress on the paragraph and urged the government to prosecute the author and the publisher. The trial failed; but, however much it inconvenienced Perry, students of English party history will not be disposed to regret that the abortive prosecution was begun, for Perry's defense contained one of the most lucid definitions of Liberalism to be found anywhere in the writings or in the speeches of the early part of this century.

Croker was the last of the government managers of the press before the old order in English politics was changed by the Reform Act in 1832. His own *Letters*, the *Life and Letters of Scott*, the *Letters of Coleridge* and the *Life of William Taylor of Norwich* afford glimpses of his work; and in his own *Letters* there is a statement of the estimate he had formed of his work and its value. Croker had as poor an estimate of journalists as the Benchers of Lincoln's Inn had, when, in 1809, they set up a rule against allowing to be called to the bar men who had written for the newspapers for pay. In 1829 he wrote

of London journalists as "needy adventurers." Yet, if Coleridge's statements are correct, Croker, to serve political ends, associated more or less intimately with journalists whose pens were at the service of the Tory government; and in 1829, when the Duke of Wellington, the premier, was badly in need of a newspaper organ and Croker was trying to get possession of the *Star* for him, he unsuccessfully endeavored to get Lockhart to join the "needy adventurers" in London. Scott, however, had no mind that his son-in-law should become a government journalist; and it was in connection with this proposal from Croker to Lockhart that Scott showed that he had an even poorer opinion of journalists than Croker, for he wrote to Lockhart "that nothing but a thorough-going blackguard ought to attempt the daily press." Moreover, neither Scott nor Lockhart had a high opinion of the nature of the services which Croker so long rendered to the Tory government in connection with the press. "Any understrapper M.P.," Lockhart wrote to Scott, "would do well enough for carrying hints to a newspaper office, and I will not, even to secure the Duke himself, mix myself up with the newspapers."

Croker, who had much of the journalistic instinct, never had the idea that the work he discharged for so many years could, in the disdainful words of Lockhart, be undertaken by "any understrapper of an M.P." Shortly before the long *régime* of the Tories came to an end he seriously put forward the suggestion that it should be the duty of a cabinet minister to instruct the press. In a letter to Planta, of August 21, 1829, he said:

Suppose you have a good paper open to you and a capital hand to work. How is he to be supplied with materials? He cannot make bricks without straw. How is he to know the line to be taken? . . . No one but a member of the cabinet could do this safely and completely—not that, if a cabinet minister were to hold the pen, he need tell state secrets; but he alone would thoroughly understand the case, and know what to avoid, what to hint, what to deny, when to leave folks in their errors and when to open the real views of the government. I have heretofore conveyed to the public articles written by prime and cabinet ministers, and sometimes have composed such articles under their eye. They supplied the facts and I supplied

the tact, and between us we used to produce a considerable effect. In a cabinet like ours surely there might be one person who could find leisure for this sort of supervision, if not for some more direct coöperation. If anything of this kind were practicable, it ought to be done with the most profound secrecy, and every possible precaution against even a suspicion should be taken, and the minister who should undertake it, and his conveyancer, as "Junius" calls it, should throw in here and there such a slight mixture of error or apparent ignorance as should obviate suspicion of its coming from so high a source.

It is extremely doubtful whether the plan set out in Croker's letter to Planta — a letter which, for the purposes of this article, is an enlightening piece of history — has ever been acted upon. At the time Croker suggested it the English newspaper press was on the eve of another change, as important as that which occurred in the first decade of the reign of George III. At least one statesman saw that this change was coming, and that the day was at hand when allowances from the treasury, appointments in the civil service, government advertising and early information for the news columns would no longer serve as bribes to tie daily newspapers to the fortunes of the government ; and that newspaper enterprise was gradually assuming such proportions that a government could no longer punish an opposition or an independent newspaper in the peculiarly annoying way in which the *Times* was punished in 1805. Lord Grey had had none of the experience in newspaper work which had been Croker's. But he was an observant man, who had been long in politics ; and in 1831 he foresaw with much clearness the great changes which England's supremacy in the world of trade and her increasing wealth were to bring upon the daily press.

When the Whigs took office under Grey, the *Courier*, of which Croker had had much experience, was still regarded as a government journal. It had broken with the Tories about the time of Catholic Emancipation. Princess Lieven, wife of the Russian ambassador, was under the impression that the new government controlled the *Courier*, and she wrote to Grey to complain of a statement in regard to Poland which had appeared in its columns. Grey wrote in reply :

I saw the article last night in the *Courier* and it vexed me very much. We really have no power over that or any other paper in great circulation. All that we can do is by sending them sometimes articles of intelligence (but even to this I am no party) to conciliate them when public opinion is not against us. But when there is a strong general feeling, as in the case of Poland, it is quite impossible to control them. We might purchase a paper that is not read, which would do us no good till it got into circulation, and then it would do just like the others. The truth is that the profits of a paper extensively taken in are so great that they are quite beyond any temptation that could be held out to them.

But though, as Lord Grey pointed out, newspapers could no longer be tied to the government by the old forms of reward, by the bribes which had been used so effectually during the sixty years preceding the Reform Act, the Whigs, when they came into power in 1831, could and did reward journalists who for principle's sake had stood by them during their long period in opposition. Civil-list pensions and appointments in the civil service were bestowed on the journalists who, in the *Examiner*, the *Morning Chronicle* and other newspapers, had upheld Liberalism in the days when Toryism was supreme and when an unwary paragraph landed an opposition newspaper writer in jail. Indeed, for nearly two generations after the first Reform Act journalists were frequently appointed to consulships, to colonial judgeships and to responsible positions in the civil service at home, as rewards for services to their political party in or out of office.

Until about 1870 there was some similarity between the methods of the English government in rewarding journalists and those which still prevail in the United States. There were, however, two important differences. An English working journalist—and by a working journalist is meant one engaged on a newspaper at a salary—was never given an office equal in importance to some of those which are bestowed on journalists in the United States. English journalists were not sent as ambassadors abroad : the line was drawn at consular appointments. To this extent journalists in England continued to share in the spoils of office ; but office holders were not

cashiered solely to make places for men whom the government desired to reward. A fairly long list could be compiled of journalists who, since the Reform Act and since the change in this century in the character of the public journals, have been appointed to office at home or abroad. About the last name in the list of those appointed to consulships is that of Hanney, at one time editor of the now defunct *Edinburgh Courant*, an organ of Toryism in Scotland of much antiquity, who, in 1871, was appointed consul to Barcelona by the Earl of Derby.

The reform of the civil service in the seventies made it no longer possible for governments to bestow offices in the state departments at home or abroad for partisan services. The gate of entry to the civil service has been widened ; but it must now be passed early in life, and at civil service examinations, or not at all ; and nowadays there are comparatively few appointments in the civil service which a government can bestow upon its journalistic supporters. Taking one year with another, there are not half a score of places into which men can be thrust simply because they have rendered some service with their pens.

The opportunities for rewarding newspaper proprietors, as distinct from journalists, came to a temporary end somewhat earlier. When Earl Grey wrote to Princess Lieven the letter which has been quoted, English daily newspapers were already undertakings in which large capital was embarked. They were then past the stage at which the government could give newspapers any really valuable privileges or aid. There were still official advertisements to give out, but the value of these was becoming small and of little account to a prosperous newspaper in comparison with its general advertising patronage. As years went on and the fiscal burdens on the press were removed by Parliament, the circulation of newspapers became larger. They became properties of great value ; and their owners began to find their way into the House of Commons, as bankers, merchants and manufacturers had been doing all through the eighteenth century. From the thirties and the

forties to the eighties, except in rare and occasional instances, like that of Sir John Easthope and the *Morning Chronicle*, newspaper proprietors carried on their business without any recognition or reward from the government. Not until 1885 did government manifest a consciousness that it was once more in their power to reward the owners of the daily journals which supported them. The form which rewards then began to take strikingly illustrates the enormous change which, since the beginning of this century, had come over British journalism ; for the meed of the influential newspaper owner was a knighthood, a baronetcy or a peerage.

Lord Salisbury was the first premier to bestow this form of reward. He began with knighthoods in 1885. Later on baronetcies were bestowed on newspaper proprietors ; and in two or three instances peerages were given. Mr. Gladstone soon followed Lord Salisbury's example. He, in turn, was followed by Lord Rosebery. There is now seldom an honors list in connection with the Queen's birthday or the New Year in which the names of newspaper proprietors do not appear. Newspaper editors also have received titles, usually knighthoods. During the last twelve years this new method of recognizing the press has been so general that there is scarcely a town in England with a population of 150,000 which has not a newspaper proprietor or an editor with a title.

One singular result has followed the innovation of 1885. The ownership of newspapers has become a fad with men who are wealthy and who are also anxious to become knights or baronets. To finance a daily newspaper committed to the fortunes of a political party has come to be recognized as a sure route to a baronetcy. It is an expensive one to travel ; but in the long run it does not cost more than endowing hospitals or bestowing large sums of money on schools of music or imperial institutes ; and it has this advantage, that it adds to a man's importance in his own neighborhood. He also retains control over the money he is paying out ; and, if the party he is supporting is likely to be long in opposition, he can spend just sufficient to keep his newspaper afloat until he obtains his

reward. Then, if he likes, he can stop it, or sell it cheap to another wealthy man who is also desirous of a baronetcy. This mode of earning a title leads occasionally to some singular changes ; for a Tory millionaire will buy a Radical newspaper to-day and bring it out as a Tory paper to-morrow. All that he has to do is to find a new editor. The paper so purchased and turned to the right-about may lose some of its former readers, but the loss of even half the reading constituency is a small matter to a man who has made up his mind to spend £50,000 or £60,000 in thus obtaining a baronetcy.

It may be asked what effect this new form of reward has upon politics. The real effect is small. An English newspaper of the better class sells chiefly on account of its news features ; and these are not affected by the fact that the editor and proprietor may have had titles conferred upon them by a Liberal or a Tory government. Any tampering with the news features would tell against the position and prosperity of the paper, and it is not attempted. The political speeches and the political news of both parties are reported honestly and fairly as heretofore ; and as long as the present high standard of English newspaper reporting is upheld, there is practically no danger to political education in the best and fullest meaning of the term. This reasoning applies to the papers of established reputations, which are also commercial enterprises. As concerns the papers which are established or transferred merely with a view to aiding the men who finance them to secure titles, the wonder is that any government can think it worth while to reward the owners with titles. Such papers, especially the evening papers of this class, depend more upon sporting-news than upon politics for their circulation ; and for their purposes a "tout" at Newmarket or Epsom, who can send to the office reliable tips as to horses, is of more value than the best editorial writer who was ever in Fleet Street.

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